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ABSTRACT

Differences between the English and Ukrainian verbal forms, meaning, and usage are studied in this booklet. While the author illustrates significant distinctions in basic forms, sentences, and in paragraph structure, he concludes that the most important differences between both systems are of a psychological nature. Examples are cited, often using the Cyrillic script. Complete poems are included, with commentary and analysis. (RL)

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CLARENCE A. MANNING

ENGLISH TENSES AND SLAVIC ASPECTS

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

One of the greatest difficulties in the proper use of both English and any of the Slavic languages is to be found in the verb. The English and Slavic verbs seem at first glance to be constructed on entirely different principles and to be subject to widely different laws not only in their morphological construction but in their syntax and even more in the psychological presuppositions which control the choice of the individual forms. This first inpression is later confirmed by a deeper study and the student is completely nonplussed by the fact that the standard grammars prepared for the use of students of the other language seem almost completely to ignore the problems which are raised even by the most superficial acquaintance.

We can have a good demonstration of what these difficulties really are, if we make e. g. a careful and accurate prose translation into English of any of the poems of Shevchenko and give full weight to the real significance of the verb forms which Shevchenko uses. Then to show that this is not merely a question of Ukrainian practice, let the student make a similar accurate translation of an outstanding poem in English by one of the contemporaries of Shevchenko into Ukrainian and he will at once see the full extent of the deviation in usage between the two languages.

This is quite different from the situation prevailing with the nouns. Ukrainian has kept with relative completeness the old Indo-European noun declensions and English has lost these totally except for **'s** in the possessive (genitive) case in some words. Yet the English substitutes for the cases, usually prepositional phrases, are fairly uniform and except for some slight idiomatic usages are at once intelligible to the person who has mastered Ukrainian.

This is not true with the verbs. The historical philologist is of course able to find in modern English traces of the aspects as they were known in earlier times, even though hidden behind a long train of development. Similarly he can find in Ukrainian traces of the original use of the different tenses. Yet these remains of history do not play a controlling role in the usage of the two languages as we see them to-day and historical explanations often serve merely to add more confusion to an already muddled situation.

It is futile to ask whehther the English or the Ukrainian system is the better adapted to the expression of modern modes of thinking. The ordinary English answer that the tense system despite its numerous auxiliary words is better adapted and richer falls down when we compare it with the possibilities of the Ukrainian aspects in the hands of a master with the richness that comes from a correct and sensitive use of the aspects.

We can only give a definite answer if we confine ourselves to the single category of time, for as a result of internal and external influences the English verb has developed the most acute sense of time and definitely tries to pinpoint the precise moment indicated by the action of each verb in its relationship to all the other verbs in the sentence and paragraph. This is the more easy for English has passed through the discipline of the medieval schoolmen who sought to apply to it all the categories that were worked out in classical Latin including the sequence of tenses in the Latin sense. All this made English a definitely hypotactic language and this in turn facilitated the multiplication of tenses in both principal and subordinate clauses to define time more closely as the very name "tense" indicates.

Ukrainian as a paratactic language with its own historical development independent of the Latin tradition but subject to the conditions of the Old Church Slavonic proceeded on quite a different path with its emphasis on the vividness of expression achieved by the rapid indication of details

around a central point with less emphasis on the direct relationship between the several points of departure. It has paid for its increased vivacity and lifelikeness by the loss of a temporal preciseness and is thus almost at the opposite pole from English whcih has stressed time above all else.

The result is that it is almost impossible to give a definite Ukrainian form for an English equivalent and the reverse is equally true. The best that we can hope for is the determination of the possible variations in usage and their limits. If we can do this, we can see how a coordination between the two languages is possible and hence can clear up many of the ambiguities that occur in many of the textbooks and in popular usage.

Let us then list the various possible English and Ukrainian forms of the verb that are at issue. Then we can make such comparison between the two systems as can be seen in the case of the individual sentence. A third step will be to compare the mode of organization of the poem or paragraph and see how the principles already found works in the yoking together of a mass of individual sentences. In that way we will have more insight into the precise nature of the structure of the usage of the two languages, even though the results may sometimes seem at variance with a strict reading of the accepted laws of language.

1. THE BASIC FORMS

Let us commence with the English verb. This supplements the usual past, present and future tenses with various progressive and perfect forms, as the series in the present, **I write, I am writing, I have written.**

The forms are:

Present — **I write**
Present Progressive — **I am writing**
Present Perfect — **I have written**
Present Perfect Progressive — **I have been writing**
Past — **I wrote**
Past Progressive — **I was writing**
Past Perfect — **I had written**
Past Perfect Progressive — **I had been writing**
Future — **I shall write**
Future Progressive — **I shall be writing**
Future Perfect — **I shall have written**
Future Perfect Progressive — **I shall have been writing.**

Here are twelve English tenses which are to be compared with seven in Ukrainian:

Present Imperfective — **я пишу**
Present Perfective — **я напишу**
Past Imperfective — **я писав**
Past Perfective — **я написав**
Pluperfect Imperfective — **я був писав**
Pluperfect Perfective — **я був написав**
Future Imperfective — **я буду писати.**

It will be noticed at once that Ukrainian (as the other Slavonic languages) has no Future Perfective. In common practice, there is no Present Perfective for the Present Perfective really serves in the vast majority of cases as the ordi-

nary Future Perfective. This is both natural and logical because by its very nature a Present Perfective must be treated either as a historical present or a future since the present is constantly changing and it is very difficult to conceive of an action completed and over in the passing second. Yet we have called it here the Present Perfective because by so doing, we shall make clear the Ukrainian parallels to certain practices in English where the actual present form has a tendency to assume the same sense but less clearly.

It will be noticed too that we have omitted such forms in English as the negative, "I do not write" and the interrogative, "do you write" for the use of "do" as an auxiliary verb in such usages is confined to the present and the past and is a development which has no relationship to the general semantics of the language.

2. THE PARALLELS IN THE SENTENCE

In general English use of the tenses seems to follow a rather clear system but if we think a little more deeply about the reasons for certain uses, we at once come to some conclusions which will clear up the ways of comparing the tenses with the Slavic and Ukrainian aspects.

"Tense marks not only time at which the action(i) is described as occurring, but also (ii) its completeness or incompleteness at that time. An action must be either finished, done, completed, perfect, at any particular time, or it must be unfinished, not yet done, incomplete, imperfect, still in progress, at that time. But though the action itself must be either finished or not finished, we may speak of it without reference to its character as finished or not finished, and our mention of the action in this aspect will then be undetermined or indefinite... Hence there are nine primary tenses, three in each period of time, — the imperfect, the perfect, and the indefinite".[1]

[1] Alfred S. West, **English Grammar**, Cambridge, 1903, p. 155.

The same author goes on to draw a clear distinction between the Perfect and Imperfect which refer to the completeness of the action and not the time. This is unlike Latin, where the Imperfect **"amabam"** means **"I was loving"** and the Perfect **"amavi" I loved.** The English Perfect has no reference to the past necessarily for it refers only to completeness. The Perfect is used when "The action is ended, but it is only just ended, and its consequences continue present with us. If the action and its consequences are over and done with, the Perfect Tense is no longer appropriate."[2]

This is a special characteristic of the English language and it is a point that is raised almost regularly in reference to comparisons with Ukrainian aspects. It is indeed one of the most troublesome points that we have to consider.

The other three tenses, the Present, Past and Future Perfect Continuous or Progressive Tenses indicate that an action has been, had been, or will have been going on, and also that it is, was and will continue to be in progress. Thus "I have been writing for an hour" is expressed in Ukrainian by **"я вже годину пишу"** exactly as it is in German by "Ich schreibe schon eine Stunde" and in French by "j'ecris depuis une heure." In the last analysis it offers little difficulty if we remember that Ukrainian uses a simple tense with the addition of some word to indicate continuation (usually not a verb).

We must note also the special uses of the Present Tense as distinct from the Present Progressive — "I write", as compared with "I am writing."

"1. This tense occasionally expresses an action going on at the present time, but it does this very rarely; 'How fast it rains'. 'The kettle boils.' Generally the Present Progressive is used in these case and in most cases the use of the simple form is impossible.

2. It expresses an habitual action as 'He goes to town every morning' and a general truth.

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[2] West, op. cit. p. 157.

3. It expresses a future action, as 'I go to Florida next week.'

4. It expresses a past action in graphic narration — the so-called Historical Present. It occurs in vivid historical writing and in the conversation of persons of lively imagination.

5. It introduces quotations; 'Shakespeare says:' This usage has much in common with (2) above."[3]

After these special notes, let us turn to the Ukrainian verb. We shall at once see that the language draws upon its full resources to make clear and primary the difference between the Imperfective and Perfective Aspects. The variations which it is able to make in this connection, largely through the flexible use of prefixes and suffixes, shows the intensity of the Ukrainian feeling for aspects and the relative indifference to questions of time.

Basically the Imperfective Aspect "describes an action which

(a) is still in progress and is incomplete
or (b) will be taking place in the future,
or (c) even if completed, the speaker is not aware of its completion.

The Perfective Aspect decribes an action or a state already completed or an action the completion of which is being taken for granted."[4]

This is a tantalizingly brief description of the difference between the two aspects but it takes into account the chief underlying significance of each aspect. The Imperfective always has reference to an action that is still going on and is conceived in terms of duration. It represents at bottom a line containing several distinct moments.

The Perfective Aspect looks at an action without regard to the time that was required for its completion and the thought of the movement of time is almost completely lacking.

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[3] West, op. cit. pp. 157 - 8.

[4] George Luckyj and Jaroslav B. Rudnyckyj, **A Modern Ukrainian Grammar**, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1949, p. 117.

Some scholars have even go so far as to say that the Perfective names an action without thinking of time except in the most general categories and have compared it to a puncture in eternity instead of a movement in time.

We notice how strongly Ukrainian feels this distinction, when we read in the same grammar, "The majority of simple Ukrainian verbs are of the imperfective aspect... The perfective aspect is formed by altering the verb either by special prefixes or suffixes, or even by altering the root of the verb."[6]

Then since the compound verb may have a somewhat changed meaning, the Ukrainian finds it possible to turn this Perfective Aspect into an Imperfective again by the addition of a suffix and he can go further to catch the full force of the new Imperfective by adding a prefix to make it again Perfective.

Thus we can have:

писати	— to write
відписати	— finish copying
відписувати	— to copy
повідписувати	— to finish copying to a certain amount.

This elaborate scheme is created by the necessity of having the available means for expressing any verbal concept in the form of both Imperfective and Perfective, if it is needed and is appropriate.

Ukrainian goes even further and Ukrainian grammarians basing themselves upon the language show certain sub-aspects in the case of various verbs. Thus imperfective verbs of going and carrying have what is called a Durative and an Iterative Aspect, depending upon whether the emphasis is to be laid upon the duration of an action or its repeated performance. [6] There can be found on a somewhat smaller scale similar sub-aspects in the Perfective Aspect to show some definite facet of the conception of the action conceived without duration of time.

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[5] op. cit. pp. 116, 117.
[6] op. cit. p. 121 - 2.

It will be noticed that with all of this extensive development there is nothing that corresponds even approximately to the English use of the Perfect tense which conceives of the action as over but its consequences continuing in time. When we attempt to put an English sentence into Ukrainian, therefore, we must think carefully whether we are laying attention on the time of the action or on the continuation of the results. This is a difficult choice for an English-speaking person but it is more difficult for a Ukrainian, putting a sentence into English, to decide when he has to adjust his thought to this supplemental feature of the English tense system.

We can now begin to parallel more closely the individual English tenses with the appropriate Ukrainian aspects.

The normal English Present Progressive — "I am writing" — corresponds almost completely to the Ukrainian Present Imperfective — **"я пишу"**. There may be times in the negative and interrogative forms that we find cases as "do you write" instead of "are you writing" and in negative forms where also the auxiliary verb "do" intrudes but the translator should detect these without too much trouble. Any other cases of disagreement are due to stylistic reasons or fuzziness of thought in one or the other language.

The normal English Past Progressive—"I was writing" corresponds as precisely to the Ukrainian Imperfective Imperfect" — **"я писав"**. We must remember in this case, however, that there is a tendency in English to use such phrases as "I wrote him every day" instead of such forms as "I was writing" or "I used to write." As we have seen, the English distinction between completed and incomplete action is often blurred and even good English writers will use the simple Past where the Past Progressive would be grammatically more exact. This is particularly true in the negative and interrogative forms, where "I did not write" and "did you write?" often seem preferred for simplicity to "I was not writing" and "Were you not writing?"

The Future Progressive—**I shall be writing**—is even less common than the Ukrainian Fuutre Imperfective **я буду пи-**

сати. It is really felt as a clumsy form and educated, colloquial and even literary English tends to replace it with the simple future whenever it is possible. In fact it is only used consistently when some subordinate phrase or clause pinpoints the sense of duration in the future as "I shall be writing when you telephone me to-morrow". Even then there is a tendency to replace it by "I shall write, until you telephone me," even though it is more inaccurate.

Thus we can say with some degree of certainty that the Ukrainian Imperfective forms can be replaced by the English Progressive forms without any difficulty. The sole possible trouble is with the English Perfect Progressive forms but these will ofter little difficulty if we remember that they correspond to a Ukrainian tense with a temporal phrase.

The average English simple Past corresponds to the Ukrainian Past Perfective in the overwhelming majority of cases, except where it is really substituted in English for the Past Progressive and should be translated by the Past Imperfective. In a large number of cases the Past Perfective is also the best form for the translation of the English Perfect and even the English Past Perfect, for the Pluperfect in Ukrainian of both aspects is used relatively rarely and usually it can be replaced by the English Past Perfect whether it is in Ukrainian Perfective or Imperfective.

On the other hand the Ukrainian Present Perfective — **"я напишу"** is almost regularly used as the Future Perfective. In fact it is the only grammatical form that the Ukrainian verb possesses which can be used as a Future. As we have seen, the English simple Present has a strong tendency to move along the same process of development and especially in the King James' Version of the Bible, the use of the simple Present as a Future is not an unusual usage as St. Matthew 21:30 "and he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not."

Yet this transfer of the Ukrainian Present Perfective into the future as the normal mode of expression is not complete,

for there are many passages where we are straining the sense of the Ukrainian word if we give it much, if any, of a future meaning. Here the conception of the Perfective aspect as a puncture in eternity comes into play and the speaker or writer uses a perfective form in order to indicate the immediateness and rapidity of the change of scene or of the impression which he has received. A case in point is to be found in Shevchenko's **Son**, 11. 123-4,

То глянь, подивися! А я полечу
Високо-високо за синій хмари:
Немає там власти, немає там кари.

Shevchenko here is using the Perfective Present really as a present perfective in the full sense of the word to show the suddenness of the change of scene.

The difficulties in the translation of the English Perfects into Ukrainian have already been mentioned, since the Ukrainian aspects do not usually supply forms noting the continuation of the results of an action. Thus there is a definite difference in the import of such phrases as "I have been in Lviv many times" and "I was in Lviv twice before the war." It is very difficult to explain the precise difference but in the first case there is a distinct implication that the visit left on me some definite impression, a thing not implied in the second case.

There are still other complications, when we use the perfect in a subordinate clause. These are usually not difficult to make out but in the future, there is a strong tendency to regard the Future Perfect as a clumsy tense and to replace it either by a Present Perfect or at times even by an ordinary Present. "After I see (have seen) him, I shall go to the office" should be (in full) "After I shall have seen him, I shall go to the office" or (possibly) "After I shall see him, I shall go to the office". It will be noted that in this case, the use of the simple Present brings it very close to the Ukrainian Present Perfective—the ordinary Ukrainian Future.

A final and important factor in the use of the English tenses is the sequence of tenses. In general under this rule, "in English, as in Latin, Primary Tenses follow Primary, and Historic Tenses follow Historic. More explicitly.—

Principal Clause	Subordinate Clause
Present	Present or Future Indicative
are followed by	
Future	
Past is followed by	Past." [7]

We have the supplemental rules for indirect discourse where the verb is not only altered to suit the subject referred to but in the past, to make necessary corrections in tense. Thus: "I will write" is altered

"I said that I would write",
"He said that he would write", etc.

In Ukrainian there is only the necessary change for person, not for tense.

We may notice the one apparent exception that if the statement to be repeated is one of universal validity, the past in the main clause has no influence. Thus "he said that water melts at 32°".

These few remarks on the English tenses show the extraordinarily complex system that the language has developed to express gradations in time and to place every action with reference to the precise moment that it occupies in a given series of events. We have paid less attention to the Ukrainian aspect but there the distinction between the Imperfective and the Perfective, between an action conceived as continuing and one without any sense of action equally well lends itself to the lively picturing of events, even if it pays less attention to their actual sequence in time.

We can summarize the foregoing remarks in the following table of equivalents between the basic English tenses and Ukrainian aspects:

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[7] West, op. cit. p. 257.

Past	Present	Future
Impf. I was writing	I am writing	I shall be writing
я писав	я пишу	я буду писати
Pf. I wrote	I write	I shall write
я написав	я напишу →	я напишу

The other English tenses represent merely refinements of this basia scheme and the person who wishes to translate English into Ukrainian must decide in each case which of the Ukrainian forms is the most appropriate. On the other hand, the person who wishes to translate from Ukrainian into English has a more difficult task because he not only has to figure out the exact sequence of the verbs in timo but to add to them the necessary overtones which are implied in the skilful use of the Ukrainian aspects.

Thus translation between Ukrainian and English cannot be a mere routine job but it requires at its best a feeling for the difference in the verbal goals of the two languages. These differences are evident in the individual sentences and clauses but they stand out still more strikingly, when we consider the larger structural units as the paragraph, where the author has the opportunity to explain his thoughts and purposes more fully. Here we shall see that we have the same situation but more expanded and the preceding has only given us a hint of the situation that we are going to face.

3. THE PARAGRAPH

In the preceding we have seen the wide differences between the English and the Ukrainian verb. The former has developed a complicated system for denoting the passage of time and the continuation of the results of the action in time. Ukrainian has rather tried to produce a system based upon the continued interplay of completed and uncompleted actions. By disregarding the gradations in time, the Ukrainian verb has tried to emphasize the prevailing types of action.

This is clear in the construction of the individual sentence but it becomes even more marked when we look at the structure of a larger unit where the author is able both to depict an action from its beginning to its end and the general manner in which that action is presented. We shall accordingly find that in the English paragraph, each verb, whether in a principal or subordinate clause, falls smoothly into an exact sequence of time. On the other hand the Ukrainian paragraph will represent a composite series of shorter scenes with stress upon the completion or incompletion of the action at any given moment without regard to its rigid logical position in the paragraph as a whole.

It is easy to show that this difference which is found in both poetry and prose is not merely a trick of style or even a feature of so-called **belles-lettres** in the narrower sense of the word but it is innate in the very structure of the language and is a necessary adjunct of the English tense and the Ukrainian aspect. We can only cite a few instances for reasons of length but they will be instructive and serve as a basis for further study and investigation.

Let us begin with two well known English poems treating of a definite historical event. The first is William Cowper's **On the Loss of the Royal George** (1803). [8]

Toll for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight bundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George
With all her crew complete.

[8] The Royal George was the flagship of Admiral Kempenfelt. In 1782, as she was being refitted in the harbor of Spithead, a sudden gust of wind capsized her and all on board were lost, including the Admiral.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tears that England owes.

Her timbers still are sound,
And she may float again
Full charged with England's thunder
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

The poem is in the form of a dirge for the loss of the Admiral and the men and is intended (as perhaps it was) to be the mood of England at the moment when the news of the catastrophe was received. It is therefore in the present and the future. As regards the actual sinking, the moment chosen for the poem is the very moment when the ship capsized. We notice in the pluperfect the description of the situation, the heeling over of the ship deliberately. Then the action of the wind and the circumstances of the accident are in the simple past, treated as a succession of points without time. The poem then returns to the present and continues with its description of the present situation and its consequences.

We find a more usual structure but one still stressing the sequence of events in the past in Charles Wolfe's **The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna** (1817). [9]

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light;
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him,
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we stedfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our weary task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

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[9] Sir John Moore was a distinguished British general who was mortally wounded when his troops were covering a British retreat from Corunna, Spain during the early stages of the Peninsular War, January 16, 1809. He was buried by his own wish in the ramparts of Corunna before dawn the next morning.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

Here we have a simple narrative of the burial of a soldier on the field of battle. The whole scene is described in chronological order from the digging of the grave to its final abandonment with no throw-backs, and so we have consistently a succession of pasts one after the other. There is only one stanza of which this is not true and that relates to the time time after the burial and the witdrawal, when the poet thinks of the reactions of the enemy who are take going to over the area. Here naturally we have the future for the poet consciously hinks of it as later than the burial and even as later than the moment when the poem is ostensibly written after the burial. That attitude of the enemy may go on for an indefinite period in the future and the poet by his use of tenses has indicated this.

As an example of a longer poem, let us take the opening of Matthew Arnold's **Sohrab and Rustum** (1853).

And the first gray of morning filled the east,
And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream.
But all the Tartar camp along the stream
Was hushed, and still the men were plunged in sleep;
Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
But when the gray dawn stole into his tent,
He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword,
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
And went abroad into the cold wet fog.
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's tent,
Through the black Tartar tents he passed, which stood
Clustering like bee-hives on the low flat strand
Of Oxus, where the summer floods o'erflow
When the sun melts the snows in high Pamere;
Through the black tents he passed, o'er that low strand,
And to a hillock came, a little back

From the stream's brink, the spot where first a boat,
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
The men of former times had crowned the top
With a clay fort; but that was fall'n; and now
The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths, and o'er it, felts were spread.
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood...

Here we have a definite interplay of the tenses. The time is the early morning. There are only two events anterior to it. The fact that Sohrab had not slept all night and the fact that the men of old had built a fortress on the hillock. Both are in the Past Perfect as earlier than the course of the action which is carried through consistently in the ordinary Past. We would indeed expect the Past Perfect in the phrase, "The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent" but we can excuse this by the proximity of the earlier "had built" and for metrical reasons. Finally in two passages where he is speaking of the permanent course and habit of the Oxus, the poet uses the present as a sign that the action that he describes takes place as a normal phenomenon of nature year in and year out and that this phenomenon was not influenced by the events which he is describing.

Throughout the entire 892 lines of the poem, we find this pattern consistently—the Past for the narration of the action, the Past Perfect for events anterior to it, the Present for the phenomena of nature, and the appropriate tenses used on the same pattern for the words of the speakers which are quoted in direct discourse.

Here we have an elaborate schematization of tenses each used in its proper significance and with its full force. The poet has devoted himself to the task of retelling the ancient story from beginning to end in a strict narrative form with careful attention to the sequence of events leading up to the tragic close.

Let us turn now to a Ukrainian poem on a somewhat similar theme, **Ivan Pidkova,** one of the poems included in

the **Kobzar** of Taras Shevchenko. We shall see that the poet has taken full advantage of the real significance of the aspects and has produced instead of a connected narrative logically bound together a series of striking pictures which produce as a whole the effects for which he is striving.

ІВАН ПІДКОВА

Було колись в Україні,
Ревіли гармати:
Було колись — запорожці
Вміли панувати!
Панували, добували
І славу і волю,
Минулося — осталися
Могили по полю!
Високії ті могили,
Де лягло спочити
Козацькеє біле тіло,
В китайку повите.
Високії ті могили
Чорніють, як гори,
Та про волю нишком в полі
З вітрами говорять,
Свідок слави, дідівщини
З вітром розмовляє,
А внук косу несе в росу,
За ними співає.

Було колись — в Україні
Лихо танцювало,
Журба в шинку, мед, горілку
Поставцем кружляла.
Було добре колись жити
На тій Україні...
А згадаймо, може, серце
Хоч трошки спочине.

Чорна хмара з-за Лиману
Небо, сонце криє:
Синє море звірюкою
То стогне, то виє,
Дніпра гирло затопило...
"А нуте хлоп'ята,
На байдаки! Море грає,
Ходім погуляти!"

Висипали запорожці,
Лиман човни вкрили.
"Грай же, море!" — заспівали.
Запінились хвилі.
Кругом хвилі, як ті гори, —
Ні землі, ні неба.
Серце мліє, а козакам
Того тільки й треба.
Пливуть собі та співають:
Рибалка літає,
А попереду Отаман
Веде, куди знає.
Похожає вздовж байдака,
Гасне люлька в роті:
Поглядає сюди-туди —
Де-то буть роботі?
Закрутивши горні уси,
За ухо гуприну,
Підняв шапку — човни стали.
"Нехай ворог гине!
Не в Синопу, отамани,
Панове - молодці!
А у Царград, до султана
Поїдемо в гості!"
— "Добре, батьку - Отамане!"
Кругом заревіло.
— "Спасибі вам!" — Надів шапку.
Знову закипіло.

Синє море. Вздовж байдака
Знову похожає
Пан Отаман та на хвилю
Мовчки поглядає.

(UVAN, Winnipeg, 1952)

Let us analyze this poem in some detail so as to understand our previous statement.

11. 1—6. Here the verbs are in the past Imperfective so as to indicate that the period of Kozak glory covered a certain period. Shevchenko laid his emphasis on the duration of that period in the past.

11. 7—12. The verbs change to the Past Perfective to show that of the past there has been left only the tombs of the Kozaks.

11. 13—20. Here we have the Present Imperfective as the dominant note for the burial mounds are still remaining and the young men sing about them, while the mounds talk with the winds in the present about the past.

11. 21—26. The poet returns to the good old time with the Past Imperfective.

11. 27—28. We are back again to the Present Perfective with the first verb a hortatory imperative stressing the fact that the thought has crossed our minds and the second a Perfective with its full future sense with no thought of duration, that the soul will take a moment's rest.

In Part 11, we have as it were an illustration of the general situation set forth in 11. 1—6 and 21—26.

11. 29—32, again the Present Imperfective describing the storm, the coming of the Kozaks to the Lyman and the raging of the sea and then to denote the speed with which it strikes.

1. 33 a Past Perfective to express the inundation of the Dnyeper mouth.

1. 34—36 are again in the present but are the directly quoted words of the Kozaks who see in the storm the possibility of a successful raid.

11. 37—42. Here we have Past Perfectives again showing in the past the rapid gathering of the Kozak boats amidst the

storm and stressing the utter lack of thought of the poet of the period of time which it required to make he fleet ready to sail.

1. 43—52. The storm continues but the Kozaks are already at sea while the Otaman pacing back and forth on his boat thinks to what port he is to direct the expedition.

11. 53—65. Once the Otaman has made up his mind for good and all, the verbs pass into the Past Perfective as the made that decision known to the men. It is interrupted by his direct instructions in the Present Imperfecive with the single exception that he states his goal of Constantinople in a Perfective to show its definiteness.

11. 65—68. The orders once given and the course set, the verbs revert to the Present Imperfective to show the constant care of the Otaman for the fleet as it sails on its way.

Let us now consolidate these pictures. Part I is a contrast between the prosperous past (Imperfective) and the nostalgic and unheroic present (Present Imperfective) with a short transition between them. The two main scenes form two sides of the history of Ukraine.

In Part II we are dealing with an episode in the past but the poet makes no effort to do more than indicate that. The basis of the picture which he presents is in the Present Imperfective alternating with two scenes in the Past Perfective—the rapid gathering of the Kozaks and their start on the expedition and 2. the indication of the decisive character of the Otaman in giving his orders which are instantly obeyed.

From the English point of view there would be no reason for these Perfective interpolations which really tell the entire story of the planning of the expedition and could be fitted into the entire scene whether it was told in the past or in the Historical Present. From the Ukrainian point of view this would be weak because it does not express with sufficient emphasis the instantaneous character of the two decisions and their immediate fulfillment. The poet instead takes his indepenedent stand at each transition and uses the form

which he judges most appropriate without regard to the time or the action of the preceding scene.

In a word **Ivan Pidkova** is constructed not on the lines of the **Burial of Sir John Moore** with its stress on the chronological but with an eye to the effectiveness of the individual scene and its position in the general idea of the poem and not in any narrow framework. As in the case of the individual sentence, the poet does not seek for chronological harmony in the verbs but for a liveliness in description which will throw into relief those moments that are supposed to pass rapidly and those which the poet wishes to indicate as lasting a longer or a shorter time.

It is very clear that this method of presenting a series of individual scenes both in the past and in the present is a typical device of Shevchenko, for if we analyze in the same way any of his other narrative poems such as **Hamaliya** or the **Haydamaky** we will obtain the same results. It is true likewise of poems as **Kateryna** although we may find there fewer sharp transitions and we can paralled these to passages in almost of his social poems. It is then fair to conclude that the poet did not feel himself obligated to maintain those careful uses of time that we have found so emphasized in the English poets of the nineteenth century.

But it is no personal mood or technique of the poet. Even it we take such a poem of Franko as the **Kamenyari,** the first six stanzas show the same swinging between the present and the past.

КАМЕНЯРІ

Я бачив дивний сон. Немов передо мною
Безмірна, та пуста, і дика площина,
І я, прикований ланцом залізним, стою
Під височенною ґранітною скалою,
А далі тисячі таких самих, як я.

У кожного голо життя і жаль порили,
І в оці кожного горить любови жар,

І руки в кожного ланци мов гадь обвили,
І плечі кожного додолу похилились,
Бо давить всіх один страшний якийсь тягар.

У кожного в руках тяжкий залізний молот,
І голос сильний нам згори мов грім гримить:
"Лупайте сю скалу! Нехай ні жар, ні холод
Не спинить вас! Зносіть і труд, і спрагу, й голод,
Бо вам призначено скалу сесю розбить".

І всі ми, як один, підняли вгору руки,
І тисяч молотів о камінь загуло,
І в тисячні боки розприскали ся штуки
Та відривки скали: ми з силою розпуки
Раз-по-роз гримали о кам'яне чоло.

Мов водопаду рев, мов битви гук кривавий,
Так наші молоти гриміли раз-у-раз:
І п'ядь за п'ядею ми місця здобували.
Хоч не одного там калічили ті скали,
Ми далі йшли, ніщо не спинювало нас.

І кожний з нас те знав, що слави нам не буде,
Ні пам'яті в людей за сей кривавий труд,
Що аж тоді підуть по сій дорозі люди,
Як ми проб'ем її та вирівняєм всюди,
Як наші кості тут під нею зогниють.

Thus here again in the first line we have the past of the dream. The contents of the dream are in the present but we can analyze the shifting of the point of view definitely in the second and third stanzas. In the fourth the poet describes the hard and constant work and in the sixth he expresses the knowledge of a future in the perfective aspect. Of course, as we have seen, the Ukrainian knows no rules of sequence of tenses, but the author utilizes the full resources of the aspectual system to make a clearer and more lively effect than English is able to accomplish through the accurate use of its tenses. Finally the last stanza with its mixture of imperfectives and perfectives shows the difference between the dif-

ficulties of the present and the desired goal in the future and ties the whole into a general agreement with the first stanza.

There can be little doubt that Franko's knowledge of German with its development of the tense system somewhat on the style of English has to some extent toned down the exuberant freedom of Shevchenko but it has not affected his precise use of the aspects, although to some extent he has avoided the complete opposition of the present and the past. He tends to show a greater appreciation of the significance of the tenses in Ukrainian than did Shevchenko but this seems to be a characteristic resulting from a more formal educational training. A study of such poems as the Master's Jokes (**Панські жарти**) and the Death of Cain shows the same features.

In the case of prose we find very much the same difference between English and Ukrainian. Even in such a tense story as Rudyard Kiplings's **The Man Who Was,** the author is able to produce the effect which he desires by sticking closely to the accepted pattern and even in the majority of the speeches of his characters, he uses the same rules of time, though they are necessarily pitched to another moment than the general narrative. Thus the pasts and the futures and the perfects in the speeches bear a complete relationship to each other, though the point of departure is treated as a present within a general narrative framework of the past. There is a consistency in the entire story which maintains the general tone.

This is not necessarily so in Ukrainian, especially in stories that aim to represent the peasant and be pitched to a peasant key. Thus in the **Pysanky** of Marko Cheremshyna, the story opens with Roman Mokan leaving the courtroom. The verb is in the imperfect imperfective and the past tense dominates during the entire introduction to the story. As it unfolds, Mokan almost unconsciously shifts into the present to express his absorption in the action of the story and then at the end of the first part reverts to the past wnere it had begun. Thus we have the past as the framework for a story

which is told in the present in a large part and there is no indication of the reason for the transition.

A very striking case of this is in the opening of the first story by Mykola Hordiyenko in his recent volume From the Volynian and Polisyan Raids of the UPA.

"З волинських і поліських рейдів УПА" (Toronto, 1959). On page 11, we have:

Треба було бачити, як гуртами сходилися молоді хлопці з Волині, Полісся і Галичини. Гарні військові казарми на передмісті Красному ожили, виповнені українською молоддю, що зійшлася тут здобувати потрібні знання володіти зброєю, щоб боронити своєї Держави. На жаль, ця можливість була дуже короткою. Німці скоро виарештовують членів Державного правління у Львові, а разом з тим нищать всякі прояви державницьких намагань українського населення на всіх окупованих ними просторах. СД в Луцьку перевело арешт організатора військового куреня поручника "Вірлика". Хоч це була велика та дошкульна втрата, курінь не попав у зневіру. Під іншою назвою, вже як "Господарський курінь", вишкіл тривав далі. Хоч назовні курінь цей мав інше командування, фактично він був підпорядкований проводові ОУН, який з підпілля керував ним. Усім було ясно, що ніхто з майбутніх підстаршин не піде в ряди німецької армії. Тут готувалося ядро української армії.

Восени 1942 року приходить новий арешт в школі. Цим разом більш дошкульний і масовий. Заарештовано десять найбільш здібних і вишколених старшин і підстаршин. Та й це не заламало плянів. Ще з більшою пильністю слідкували думка й очі, ще міцніше стискалися руки на замкові вишкільного кріса.

Here we have a more or less consistent picture of the organization and training of at OUN detachment, later to be incorporated in the UPA. As we should expect of a historical account, this is in the past and whether the Pertective or Im-

perfective aspects are chosen in any individual case depends upon the actual intention of the author to describe an event or its development. The arrests and interference by the German forces as episodes outside the normal train of development are placed in the Present tense to show that they are out of harmony with the prevailing mood.

These few passages, selected almost at random from English and Ukrainian literature, show very clearly what we would expect from our consideration of the direct uses of the different forms of the aspects and the tenses. They show that in combinations of sentences, in poems, paragraphs and entire stories, Ukrainian style does not insist upon the preservation of a definite point of reference in time which is to be retained throughout the entire work. They indicate rather that the Ukrainian emphasis is laid upon the individual scenes, the individual miniatures, which are piled one on top of the other to form a whole within a broad and unified framework. The English, on the other hand, stresses an inner relationship as shown by the passing of time and tends to produce an organic work, every detail of which can be checked for time of happening against every other, so that the reader if he cares to be ultra-critical can pinpoint in time every verb, every phrase and a lack of a strict chronology is treated as a severe lapse. That is something of which the Ukrainian never dreams unless he sets himself in an almost pedantic way to write a chronology.

4. IN OTHER SLAVIC LANGUAGES

The practice which we have been discussing is not confined to Ukrainian, although it may be more marked in that language because of the endeavor of the authors to develop the language on the basis of the vernacular speech of the Ukrainian peasants, for in all languages the traditional folk poetry and the ordinary vernacular do not follow the rigid laws of syntax prescribed by the grammarians. We can find traces of it in the other Slavic authors, especially in the poetry of the first half of the nineteenth century when the influence of folk poetry and the collecting of folk songs were immediate subjects of interest to even the best educated and the most elevated writers.

Its use in Russian has been discussed from varying points of view several times and explained on differing principles. Thus the volume of Prof. Andre Mazon, **Emplois des aspects du verbe russe,** (Paris, 1914) gives many examples which he seeks to classify by means of the criteria employed in French. There is a further note by the present author, "The Historical Use of the Present Imperfective and the Present Perfective in Russian" (**Language,** Vol. XV, pp. 229 ff) and there are still other studies noting aspects of the same phenomenon.

Let us look at a few references in Russian and elsewhere and here of course, for reasons of space, we must be even briefer and perhaps more haphazard than in the handling of the Ukrainian section.

Let us commence with the last stanza of the early poem of Pushkin, **Evlega,** written in 1814 and we must remember that Russian poetry of the eighteenth century was very heavily influenced by the Ukrainian literature of the period,

even though it was not written in the vernacular speech of the Ukrainian of the day:

Он поднял меч... и с трепетом Эвлега
Падет на дерн, как клок летучий снега,
Метелицей отторженный со скал.
Друг на друга соперники стремятся,
Кровавый ток по камням побежал;
В кустарники с отчаяньем катятся.
Последний глас Эвлегу призывал —
И смерти хлад их ярость оковал.

This last stanza with its interplay of verbs in the present and past tenses, is a reflection of the usage that we find throughout the poem where aspects and tenses seem to have been chosen on quite a different principle from any that would be invoked in any of the Western European languages. Still, if we look to the idea of the picturesque and the vivid, we can see that there was a system of its own kind in the choices made by Pushkin and that he was working to secure what he definitely conceived as a poetic means of expression.

We find a similar mode of expression in **Poltava,** where the poet is describing the actions of Maria Kochubeyevna when her parents reprimand her for her love for Mazeppa:

Она опомнилась, но снова
Закрыла очи — и ни слова
Не говорит. Отец и мать
Ей сердце ищут успокоить,
Боязнь и горесть разогнать,
Тревогу смутных дум устроить —
Напрасно. Целые два дня,
То молча плача, то стеня.

The **Skazka of the Golden Cock** will supply many other illustrations as the following:

Петушок с высокой спицы
Стал стеречь его границы.
Чуть опасность где видна,
Верный сторож как со сна
Шевельнется, встрепенется,
К той сторонке обернется
И кричит: "Кири-ку-ку!
Царствуй, лежа на боку!
И соседи присмирели,
Воевать уже не смели.

Yet it is remarkable that Pushkin almost never employs this device in any of his narrative prose, even **The Tales from Belkin** where he is ostensibly reproducing the stories of a rather crude country squire who aspires to literary fame. In his prose works Pushkin continued in the tradition of the strict practices which he had imitated from Sir Walter Scott and Washington Irving and his example in this respect was followed by the majority of the Russian authors who attempted to regularize the use of the aspects and tenses on the pattern that was set by the grammar of Lomonosov, who based his ideas on Latin and German examples. It is only works which purport to reproduce popular speech or are frankly archaizing as some of the stories of Remizov in modern times that lfy definitely in the face of the grammatical rules, even though Russian like Ukrainian does not know the Latin principle of the sequence of tenses.

When we pass to the literature of the Western Slavs, the opening stanzas of **Konrad Wallenrod** by Mickiewich will show us again reflectings of the same usage, alihough theposition of Latin in the development of Polish culture has perhaps modified the reckless gaiety with which the Russian and Ukrainian poets felt free to disregard many of the strict conventions of the grammarians.

Z Maryenburskiej wiezy zadzwoniono,
Dziala zagrzmialy, w bebny uderzono;
Dzien' uroczysty w Krzyzowym Zakonie.

Zewszad komtury do stolicy spiesza
Kiedy, zebrani w kapituly gronie,
Wezwawszy Ducha Swietego, uradza,
Na czyich piersiach wielki krzyz zawiesza,
I w czyje rece wielki miecz oddadza.
Na radach splynal dzien' jeden i drugi,
Bo wielu mezow staje do zawodu
A wszyscy rowniez wysokiego rodu,
I wszystkich rowne w Zakonie zaslugi;
Dotad powszechna miedzy bracia zgoda
Nad wszystkich wyzej stawi Wallenroda.

Po modlach wyszli. Arcykomtur zlecil,
Spoczawszy nieco, powracac' do choru
I znowu blagac', aby Bog oswiecil
Kaplanow, braci i mezow obioru.

Zaraz Halbana i celniejszych braci
Wyzwa do siebie i na strone bierze,
Aby z daleka od ciekawej rzeszy
Zasiegnac' rady, udzielic' przestrogi.

(Mickiewicz, Konrad Wallenrod)

We can find similar intermingling of the past and the present in Czech literature in Karel Hynel Macha's **Maj** which marks the start of the Romantic period in Czech literature and other cases but as we might expect, the history of this usage in the different Slavic languages shows great variations, depending upon the other influences to which the language has been subjected.

It is particularly marked in South Slavic, for the folk epos with the sagas of Kosovo and of Marko the King's Son have left an indelible mark upon much of the nineteenth century. This is particularly true of the works of Petar Petrovich Nyegosh who in his prose account of the **Life of the Dead Neskretnikovic"** says:

Добри работници, брза работајутьи, дођоше скоро до мојега тјела. Та, какое витьех свујем, скочих како Хрт с покровом у руке и утечем измедьу работниках. Работници, зачутьени таґовијем страшнијем видьеньем,

онијеме и попадају около гроба мислетьи и воображајутьи себе да сам вампир или каков други нечисти дух који дави и мучи умну животиньу.

(П. П. Његош, Писма, Београд, 1953, p. 330).

What we have said is by no means an exhaustive study of this peculiarity of the Slavic languages. It does indicate that the extensive development of the aspects and the relatively little attention that has been paid to the tenses extends far outside Ukrainian and is basically inherent in the entire Slavic group of languages. In their development the Slavs have passed through many different systems of education imposed from outside or adopted for the purpose of Europeanization. These processes have had their effects and it is very difficult to generalize further than to note the potential existence of this feature which often complicates the actual rendering of these languages into one or another of the tongues of Western Europe and of other lingual groups.

5. CONCLUSION

Our review in the preceding section has shown that the differences between the English and Ukrainian treatment of the verb go much deeper than the question of grammatical forms and verbal resources. They have their roots in the basic psychology of the language and type of appeal that language tries to make. We might, if we would, draw from this some hypotheses as to the national psychology of both English and Ukrainian, but the study of any national psychology is as yet so elementary that we cannot hope to fit into any acceptable framework phenomena such as we have been noticing with any hope of success. In fact the few experiments which have been made along this line have almost been ludicrous in their results.

It is better therefore for us to take a more modest goal and to stress the importance of this varied use of the verb in translation and in the understanding of the two languages. Here it cannot be overlooked.

Translation, especially of **belles-lettres,** is of necessity unsatisfactory. It is not too much to say that translations are valued for their literary value in their own language and receive praise in direct proportion to the ignorance which the reader has of the original. As an illustration, we may cite Fitzgerald's translation of **Omar Khayyam,** which is perhaps one of the best pieces of translation in English but receives little praise from any who have a real knowledge of the original Persian.

It is very doubtful, if any one, even a gifted poet, could translate from English into Ukrainian and **vice versa** and maintain all the nuances of the original. The result would be labored or heavy. Yet a translator who realized what those

nuances were, could probably create the same effect in the other language but by vastly different means, for both systems of verbs are highly flexible in different ways, highly picturesque and expressive.

On the highest literary scale the translator must choose the appropriate means for rendering not merely the thought but the connotation of the original. Even on the lower plane of a search for mere intelligibility he must work to the best of his own ability along the same lines, supplying or subtracting or replacing what is needed to meet the standards of the language in which he is writing.

This is no easy task for it shows that the choice of tense or aspect is not merely a question to be solved by rule of thumb but that it penetrates into the real understanding of the language. If this can be brought home, the way is clear in advanced studies of the languages for transferring many questions which are settled superficially in elementary grammars to questions of literary style. Once that is understood, we will have new grounds for comparing aspects and tenses and understanding that the two languages, however they vary, have developed tools of equal sharpness but varying capacity and perhaps the way will be opened for the preparation of translaions of masterpieces which will take their proper place in the world literature as known to both the English-speaking world and the Ukrainians and other Slavs.

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